

Serve Idaho Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Review Process and Selection Criteria for 2021-2022 Formula AmeriCorps Programs

Applicant Name/Organization: _____

Program Name: _____

NEW ☐

RECOMPETE ☐

FIXED PRICE ☐

PROFESSIONAL CORPS ☐

			Possible	Reviewer
1. Executive Summary	0		0	
2. Program Design	50% (50 points)			
		Theory of Change and Logic Model	24	
		Evidence Tier	12	
		Evidence Quality	8	
		Notice Priority	0	
		Member Experience	6	
		TOTAL SECTION 2.	50	
3. Organizational Capacity	25% (25 points)			
		Organizational Background and Staffing	9	
		Compliance and Accountability	8	
		Culture that Values Learning	4	
		Member Supervision	4	
		Past Performance for Current Grantees and Former Grantees (re-competing applicants and formula grantees only)	0	
		TOTAL SECTION 3.	25	
4. Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy	25% (25 points)			
		Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy	25	
		TOTAL SECTION 4.	25	
TOTAL SCORE:				/100

Do you recommend this application be sent forward to AmeriCorps to be considered for possible formula AmeriCorps funding?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Reviewer Signature: _____

Date: _____

Page Limit cannot exceed 10 pages for the Narratives, including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants.

1. Executive Summary: -0- Points

The applicant will fill in the blanks in the following template to complete the executive summary:

The **[Name of the organization]** proposed to have **[Number of]** AmeriCorps members who will **[service activities the members will be doing]** in **[the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]**. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for **[anticipated outcome of project]**. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage **[number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable]** who will engage in **[what the leveraged volunteers will be doing]**.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of **[Focus Area(s)]***. The CNCS investment of **[\$[amount of request]** will be matched with **[\$[amount of projected match]**, **[\$[amount of local, state, and federal funds]** in public funding and **[\$[amount of non-governmental funds]** in private funding.

**If the program is not operating in a CNCS' focus area, omit this sentence.*

Fixed Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-time Fixed, No Cost Slots) should list their Other Revenue (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Executive Summary:

2. Program Design - 50 points total

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification/ Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
a. THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL WORKSHEET	0	1-12	13-24	

The theory of change shall address:

- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.
- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The logic model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
 - Locations or sites in which members will provide services.
 - Number of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention.
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
 - The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention).
 - The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week.)
 - The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level).
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served). If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators.
- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant's theory of change. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's theory of change and should represent significant program activities.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures. Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time that suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. **Logic model content that exceeds the three pages will not be reviewed.**

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Theory of Change/Logic Model:

Selection Criteria	Pre-preliminary Evidence	Preliminary Evidence	Moderate Evidence	Strong Evidence	Total Score
b. Evidence Tier	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Information, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

Pre-preliminary evidence means the applicant has not submitted an outcome or impact evaluation of the same intervention described in the application, although the applicant may have collected some performance data on the intervention (e.g., data on intervention outputs and/or outcomes). Applicants in this tier must describe in the Evidence Base section of the application how their program design is evidence-informed (see definition above). Applicants may also cite prior performance measure data if applicable.

Preliminary evidence means the applicant has submitted up to two outcome evaluation reports ([non-experimental](#)) that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and yielded positive results on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. The outcome evaluations may either have been conducted internally by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant. The study design must include pre and post-assessments without a [statistically matched](#) comparison group or a post-assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups. In some cases a retrospective pre-post assessment may be considered, but its use must be justified in the text of the evaluation report.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Preliminary evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

Moderate evidence means the applicant has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Evidence of effectiveness (or positive findings) is determined using experimental design evaluations (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT)) or Quasi-Experimental Design evaluations (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. The ability to generalize

the findings from the RCT or QED beyond the study context may be limited (e.g., single-site.) The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

Strong evidence means the applicant has submitted up to two evaluation reports demonstrating that the same intervention described in the application has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state-level (e.g., multi-site) using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design evaluation (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)) or a Quasi-Experimental Design evaluation (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. Alternatively, the proposed intervention's evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs of the same intervention described in the application in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Findings from the RCT or QED evaluations may be generalized beyond the study context. The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Strong evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Evidence Tier:

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification / Additional Information	Responsive Needs little Additional Information	Total Score
c. Evidence Quality	0	1-4	5-8	

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);
- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;
- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design;
- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years;
- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Evidence Quality:

Selection Criteria	Fits Within Notice Priority	Does Not Fit Within Notice Priority
d. NOTICE PRIORITY (0 Points)		

- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2021 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in *Funding Priorities* section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, and the proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the *Funding Priorities* section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Information.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Notice Priority:

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification / Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
e. MEMBER EXPERIENCE	0	1-3	4-6	

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.
- The applicant will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK Member Experience:

3. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY – 25 points total

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification/ Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
a. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING	0	1-5	6-9	

- The organization details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK Organizational Background and Staffing:

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification/ Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
b. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY	0	1-4	5-8	

- The organization has a monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.
- The CNCS-required evaluation report meets CNCS requirements (if applicable).
- The CNCS-required evaluation report is of satisfactory quality (if applicable).

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK Compliance and Accountability:

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification/ Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
c. CULTURE THAT VALUES LEARNING	0	1-2	3-4	

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collect and use information, including performance data, for learning and decision making

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK Organizational Background and Staffing:

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification / Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
d. MEMBER SUPERVISION	0	1-2	3-4	

- AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.
- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK Member Supervision:

4. COST EFFECTIVENESS and BUDGET ADEQUACY -25 points total

Cost Per Member Service Year – Cost effectiveness will be evaluated by analyzing cost per MSY in relation to the program design. Having a low cost per member is a competitive advantage. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and recompeting applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than previously funded may receive higher priority for funding.

All recompeting Grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost including why this increase could not be covered by grantee share. This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum or if the increase is due to increased costs associated with the grant.

(\$16,300/MSY maximum for cost reimbursement and fixed amount grants)

Selection Criteria	Not Responsive Information Missing	Marginally Responsive Needs Clarification/ Additional Information	Responsive Needs Little Additional Information	Total Score
a. COST EFFECTIVENESS & BUDGET ADEQUACY	0	1-12	13-25	

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year.
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.
- Current indirect cost rate is included in the budget.
- Budget identifies the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for Fixed Amount applicants.
- Budget indicates the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy:

5. Evaluation Summary or Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 points)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, they have provided a data collection plan in the “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field that includes the following:

- A description of the applicant’s data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If the applicant does not yet have a data collection system, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high-quality system.
- A description of how the applicant will use performance data (including CNCS performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.

If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time, they have submitted their evaluation plan in the “Evaluation Summary or Plan” section of the Narratives field in CNCS’s web-based management system. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, they have submitted their evaluation report as an attachment, and have also submitted an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field in the system.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following:

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results.
- Outcome(s) of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation.
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes.
- Proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components.
- Description of the data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures that will be used in the evaluation.
- Analysis plan that clearly describes the methodology/ies that will be used to analyze the collected data.
- A timeline for the evaluation that describes how the evaluation will cover at least one year of CNCS-funded activity and will be completed within the three-year timeframe of the grant.
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator.
- The proposed budget.

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field of the Narrative does not count toward the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 20,000 characters.

REVIEWER COMMENTS/FEEDBACK for Evaluation Summary or Plan:

The performance measures this applicant proposes:	YES	NO
Are National Performance Measures.		
Align with the application narrative.		
Align with the logic model submitted by the applicant.		
Have targets that are reasonable - not too low and/or not too high for the # of AmeriCorps members requested.		
Align logically, i.e., the results of interventions provided by AmeriCorps members should, in fact, result in what the applicant proposes as an outcome.		
The measurement tools this applicant proposes:		
Adequately measure results.		
Need to be strengthened.		